

## The Boy On The Lake by Trevor Schaefer

□ Children love their summer vacations. It's a time when kids can be kids, without any thought given to schoolwork or even what day of the week it is. For kids, summer vacation is full of Saturdays. Whether this summer vacation could be the last is something that never would cross most children's minds. That's how it was for me, Trevor Schaefer, up until the Fall of 2002.

□ I'll never forget my last carefree summer vacation: Boating with my friends on Payette Lake in my Eden-esque hometown of McCall, Idaho. Back then, I took for granted that I would have many more perfect summer vacations. I had just started playing football for my school team. I was finally ready to become a teenager.

□ Then, I started getting the headaches. Nothing too bad at first, but soon those minor headaches that were just an inconvenience turned to pounding and nausea-inducing. I had trouble with my vision and balance. My idyllic youth came to an end that fall with one sentence, "Trevor, you have brain cancer". Now, I was a cancer kid and nothing would ever be the same.

□ I would later learn that cancer saved my life. At the height of my pain and suffering, brought on by my treatment of radiation and chemotherapy, I experienced a sense of calm. I looked at my mom one morning while poking at my breakfast that I hardly had the stomach to consume and said to her, "Mom, I am so angry that this happened to me, but maybe something good will come of this so no other kids will have to suffer." It was at that moment that our journey evolved into a story about why a seemingly healthy child could suddenly contract such a deadly disease. I soon realized I wasn't the only child in my small town suffering from cancer.

□ My mom took up the fight for answers while I was battling for survival; I would join her quest when I was ready, if I was ready. The road was tough for me and for my mom. For her, roadblocks were everywhere. It seems, getting answers to questions involving the environment, cancer and other chronic diseases in small communities is no easy task. However, my mom persevered. So did I.

□ I made it through the hell of cancer treatment and five years after my diagnosis was considered to be cancer-free. However, being cancer-free did not mean my life went back to normal. Once a cancer-kid...well, it was impossible to reintegrate myself into the life I once had. I walked differently, spoke differently and acted differently than before. And being different at that age is a very difficult thing to overcome. I had lost my youth, my confidence and my friends. I was alone, except for my mom, Elliot my chemo dog and Susan Rosser, the author who chronicled my story which led to our newly released book, "The Boy on the Lake". With the help of my mother and Susan Rosser my resolve was

strengthened and Trevor's Trek Foundation was born. Trevor's Trek Foundation is dedicated to awareness of childhood cancer and why children get cancer in the first place.

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□As my cancer journey continued I met with local dignitaries and Senators and spread my story of hope. In January of 2011, with the help of Senators Barbara Boxer (California) and Mike Crapo from my home state of Idaho, Senate Bill, S.76, was introduced and given the moniker, Trevor's Law.

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□Trevor's Law would authorize federal agencies to form partnerships with states and academic institutions to investigate and help address disease clusters. Simply put, it will give children and communities a voice. Just because children have no vote, does not mean they have no voice. In March of 2011, Bill S.76 was brought before the Environment and Public Works

□Committee for a hearing where I had the opportunity, along with Erin Brockovich, to address the committee about the importance of Trevor's Law.

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□In June of that year, the bill passed committee where it now awaits introduction onto the Senate floor where it will, one day, be voted upon and passed through to the House and on to the President for enactment.

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□The book, \*The Boy on the Lake\*, is a testament to the emotional and physical journey my mother and I had to endure over the 9 year span of my initial diagnosis to passage of Trevor's Law out of committee. I hope this book and the story of our travails and triumphs will help to inspire others in the fight against childhood cancer and other chronic diseases that prey on the innocence of children.